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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY USSR

SUBJECT Wage Rates and Earnings in the USSR

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SOURCE

[Redacted Source Information]

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1. Nominal wages and earnings in defense industry have been higher than that in civilian industry. [Redacted] so-called "Spetsotdel" was organized at "NKMZ" i e, a joint designing-technological division issuing drawings for the manufacture of special (military) items produced by the plant. Personnel was drawn primarily from different divisions of the Projecting-Designing Department of the plant. All designers transferred to this division at once received a considerable wage increase. The difference between their earnings and the earnings of all other designers of the plant was considerable, since they received large premiums and put in quite a bit of compulsory overtime work. I have heard that the earnings and wages of people working in aviation industry, were considerably higher than those of people working in civilian industry.
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2. [Redacted] earnings and wages of workers and employees of plant #12 were considerably higher than those of workers and employees of "NKMZ". Their food and clothing supply was considerably better both in quality and quantity, than that at other plants and this circumstance was more important than money during those years (1942-1945).
3. Conversations with different people at different times have given us a clear general picture of wages paid for labor in defense industry. People working there have been paid considerably better. Besides that, people working in defense industry have had privileges such as: better chances of obtaining permits for entrance into rest homes and sanatoriums; better kindergartens, homes for infants, and dining rooms; better housing, etc. The higher the position held by a person, the higher the difference between wages and earnings has been. Salaries were also dependent upon the significance which the given branch of industry had from the viewpoint of the government. Earnings of the well-known aviation designer Yakovlev, who was chief of an aviation designing division, exceeded many times the earnings of other corresponding chiefs of divisions in defense industry,

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to say nothing of civilian industry. Besides that, a personal car was assigned to him, and he had other privileges (all of this is hearsay). The difference between wages and earnings in defense and civilian industries was bigger during and after World War II than before, as far as I know.

4. People working in defense industry received a higher percentage of government rewards, (decorations and medals, which brought privileges to people who got them), than did those working in all other branches of industry. This is also true of the distribution of yearly Stalin Premiums. These two last items can be checked with newspapers, but the circumstance that it can be partly hidden in newspapers should be kept in mind.

5. [redacted] a girl [redacted] defended her thesis in one of the Moscow universities and was sent to work at a certain research-scientific organization of defense industry. [redacted] after she had been working there about two months. Her wages, [redacted] amounted to 2200 rubles per month (she would have received about 600-700 rubles, if she had worked at a plant of civilian industry) and a room at a hotel was at her disposal. Food and other necessities were supplied for people working in this organization. According to her, graduate engineers with experience got wages of 4000, 5000, 6000 rubles per month, and professors, under whose leadership the organization worked, got wages of 10,000 and 15,000 rubles per month. At that time, the chief engineer of "NKMZ" received about 3000 rubles per month (I do not remember the exact figure).

6. In the USSR, the level of wages at enterprises depends upon the size of an enterprise and its importance from the viewpoint of the government. Wages at metallurgical enterprises are higher than at the majority of other enterprises of civilian industry. Wages at large enterprises as a rule, are higher than at medium and small ones. Wages and earnings at "NKMZ" were considered relatively high, due to the fact that before World War II it was a plant-giant, and after the war it remained a large enterprise (I have in mind "NKMZ" in Elektrostal). [redacted] the following wages were paid at "NKMZ" in Elektrostal in 1945: a chief engineer of the plant received 2500-3000 rubles per month; a chief designer, 1600 rubles; heads of divisions of the Projecting-Designing Department of the plant, about 1200-1400 rubles; leading engineers-designers, 1100-1200 rubles; heads of groups of engineers-designers, 900-1000 rubles; engineers-designers, 700-800 rubles; designer-draftsmen, 500-650 rubles; detail-draftsmen, 250-450 rubles. Periodically earnings were higher than wages. There was a piece-rate pay system for draftsmen, designer-draftsmen, and engineer-designers, and they, as a rule, used to earn somewhat more than their wages. There was a bonus system for heads of designers groups, leading engineer-designers and chiefs of divisions. As a rule, a certain sum of money was reserved by the director of the plant for rewarding employees of the plant with premiums in case of fulfillment of given orders in a fixed time, i.e. for orders fulfillment of which in a fixed time was considered to be important. This sum of money was distributed beforehand between those shops and departments of the plant which had to participate in manufacturing the order. On fulfillment of the given order in the fixed time by a certain shop or a department, the premium reserved for the shop or department was first allotted by a chief of the shop or the department among those employees who had participated in manufacturing the given order but who were not included in a piece-rate pay system (i.e. senior employees). After this allotment, lists of employees were given over to the chief engineer of the plant for approval; the latter frequently made alterations in them. After approval by the chief engineer, the premium was paid by the bookkeeping department of the plant, sometimes with a rather long delay. The rewarding of chiefs of shops and departments of the plant was performed by the director of the plant on the basis of certain factors. Bonus systems were frequently changed; there was much arbitrariness in the distribution of premium money. There were always people wronged; there was always a feeling of uncertainty of receiving the premium; the administration frequently deceived employees, either cut off the sum of the premium, or took it all away. Everyone had a very great need of money as the living standard was very low and everybody, strictly speaking, was in a state of poverty; this is why hopes for a premium, disappointments, hidden bustle with its distribution, and expectation of receiving created a very nervous situation.

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7. "Ts K B M M" had been organized due to the need for a new blooming mill in a short period of time (blooms were needed for five metallurgical plants and for two more plants later). Besides that, "Ts K B M M" was supposed to contain a leading designing department for metallurgical equipment. In connection with this, especially favorable conditions were created for people working there. The chief of "Ts K B M M", professor doctor of technical science A I Tselicov, received 5000 rubles per month because he was a doctor of technical science. Besides that, he delivered lectures at a university and published his scientific works for which he received additional money. [redacted] his total earnings were about 12,000 -15,000 rubles per month. His deputy received 3000 rubles. So-called candidates of technical science who occupied positions as chiefs of divisions or sections, received 3000 rubles as candidates of technical science in conformity with status. Chiefs of divisions, who were not candidates of technical science, received about 2000-2500 rubles; so-called chief engineers of projects received 1700-1800 rubles; Engineer-designers, 900-1300 rubles. There was a bonus system in "Ts K B M M" too.

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